

Transcript of Remarks
U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick
Inauguration of "September 11: We Will Never Forget" Casa
Thomas Jefferson, Brasília, Brazil

Ambassador Zoellick: One of the first things that I said when I spoke to the press after my meeting with Finance Minister Malan was that the first message I had here in Brazil was one of thanks to the Brazilian people for the warmth and solidarity that they showed to my country after September 11th. So I can think of no better place and no better purpose to spend this day six months after that day of tragedy than to be here with you at this exhibit.

And indeed, Brazil is a very special country for this message. Because, as all of you know, Brazil, like the United States, is a country of the New World. It is a country that brought together peoples from all over the world, different walks of life, and created a very special amalgam through the principles of tolerance and integration. We are, of course, extremely appreciative of the actions taken at the top levels of Brazil's government by President Cardoso, Foreign Minister Lafer, and others, in the immediate aftermath of September 11th. It was, of course, Brazil that invoked the Rio Treaty representing the common threat to our security.

Sadly, as President Bush has told the American people and the people of the world, this is not a struggle of a week, or a month, or even a year. It is one that will go on. It is not just about a conflict with the Taleban in Afghanistan, because the roots of terrorism, unfortunately, run very deep in too many countries. On my own recent travels in Indonesia, Kenya, other parts of the world, one has seen the reach of al-Qaeda. And therefore it is all the more important that the civilized democracies of this world band together to deal with this threat as a long-term problem. This is in part a conflict of soldiers, and one involving financial trails and intelligence.

But we think the challenge runs deeper, because, while I do not believe that terrorism finds its roots in poverty, I think its roots lie in a much deeper evil. There is no doubt that societies that fragment, that are poor, that have no sense of hope become fertile fields for terrorism. So, all of us have an interest in development, in democracy, in openness, in hope, in opportunity.

Now, part of the story in the exhibit here is about individual people caught up in events beyond their control. I think all of us will look back on September 11th. It will be one of those days that for one generation was the Cuban missile crisis, or for another generation was the landing of the Apollo mission on the moon. It will be a momentous day that people will remember where they were and what they were doing. And in that sense, as the Chargé said, it has a chance to change all our lives. I remember being in my office right across from the White House because the plane that crashed was probably targeted

for the White House and my office. So, I am probably here today with you because of the heroic actions of some people on that plane.

But I am struck most of all by what I read in the United States of the effect of these events on children. And that is why some of these exhibits, particularly this flag, are ones that are especially meaningful. Because, if there is hope out of tragedy, it is the fact that first graders – 72 of them as I understand – could in the immediate aftermath think of a bond to children in a country that they had never visited, never seen, perhaps only knew about in very general ways.

It reminds of the story of some of the firemen and policemen from New York City, that in the aftermath of losing their colleagues, went to Afghanistan to bring candy and to try to help the children in Afghanistan, because in all our countries children are the future. And that is why Madam president that I want to thank you and your colleagues for the work that you do at Casa Thomas Jefferson, because, like many of you, I have had the opportunity to visit another home of Thomas Jefferson. And it is a home that, as you can tell from the life he lived, and the books he read, and the research that he did, reached out across borders and across time.

He was also, of course, a big promoter and friend of Brazil's independence. And he wrote, in 1820, after he left office, at the time of Brazil's move into independence that he looked forward to the day when the fleets of the United States and Brazil would sail together for common cause.

And indeed, in a small way, that is what my visit is about, too, because I believe Brazil is on the edge of a new era. It has created a country of the size of a continent. It has looked outward in terms of its relations with Spanish America. And now, as its economy also looks outward, I believe Brazil has a chance to play an increasingly important role in the global economy and society.

So, part of the point of my visit here is whether it be questions of security, or politics, or economy, to explore the common interests and compatibility and, I think, closer identity of our two countries in shaping the 21st Century. And certainly the foundation of this, if it is to be successful, is through the work of people like you and children like this. So, thank you.

End Text